

# SOME VIEWS CONTRIBUTED BY FRIENDS OF THE TIMES

## A COLUMN DEVOTED TO THE EXPRESSION OF OPINION ON TOPICS OF INTEREST.

The Times cheerfully opens its columns to its friends and readers for the expression of opinions on topics of interest to the public. While the editor of The Times neither undertakes to endorse or deny the correctness of the views expressed, the paper is glad to allow space for the contributions.

### Suggestions to the Legislature.

Sir—Apropos of several editorials in The Times recently permit me to say a few words. Your remarks on State economy as pertaining to salaries of officers are pertinent and sensible, but there are several items that seem to me may be bettered and for the good of all except the office-holder. One is the annual assessment of personal property by the Commissioner of the Revenue. Each year all this property must be gone over and re-listed to the annoyance of the property holder, and to the benefit, so far as I know, of none. If there should be a slight increase of the assessment each year, I believe the cost is fully absorbed in the annual assessment. To many persons now it is merely a mockery, without any pretense of a new assessment. Officers take from the former assessment an amount equal to the depreciation of the value of their property and continue the assessment. Once in two years is often enough for the assessment of personal property, and money, I believe, may be saved to the individual and county.

Another item that calls to my mind for better economy is the too frequent holding of elections. The numerous elections in this State have become a nuisance to many people; so much so that many good people only vote at some special or general election.

County and State elections should be held at the same time and for the same term of office. All of the county officers should be paid a commission out of their county office, except the judge, commonwealth's attorney, sheriff and supervisors. Every office and every institution so far as possible should be made self-sustaining. To be paid a commission out of the business of the office ought to inspire a man to more diligence in his work, and furthermore have the effect of making those who have business with the office and officers pay for the transaction of that business.

There is one more point as touching finances. A certain gentleman of Lynchburg, I believe, advocates a three-dollar capitation tax on all male citizens of a majority age. This new doctrine may be all right for the man in Lynchburg or other city, but it surely is all wrong to the country or rural people.

To compel a countryman to pay as much capitation tax as the man of the city is to suppose that their advantages are equal, which every one knows is not true.

The man of the city has his church, post-office, (yes, mail at his door), stores, court-houses, lawyers, election precincts, school, and the best of schools, physicians and other things (so numerous to mention, almost within sight of his home, and in addition to this, a paved street to walk or drive to these places. The countryman, on the other hand, has to spend a whole day often in driving to and from these places of privilege and necessities, and in addition have a muddy road often to travel, toll to pay, and dinner and horse feed bill to pay. It frequently takes hundreds of dollars annually more from the countryman to secure the same advantages in traveling, going to school, and other things, than the man of the city. Now, if the man of the city has these advantages and benefits he ought to pay for them without a howl from his neighbors.

Furthermore, to place a three-dollar capitation tax on all would be to de-capitalize perhaps double the number of capitation delinquents that we now have. I am speaking in behalf of the farmer and day laborer, for there is no class of people in the whole country that earn their bread and money by as hard toil as they do.

GEO. A. COFF. Fisher's Hill, Va., January 30, 1901.

### Hazing at West Point and at the V. M. I.

Editor of The Times:

Sir—If three months ago any one had published an account of the hazing at West Point, giving the festive, barbarous practices there, it would have been received with incredulity everywhere. The people of the United States would have refused to believe such a condition of affairs possible in their national academy, and would have regarded the reports as the work of a malicious and absurd. They have known for a long time that hazing was a feature of military training, for some occult reason beyond the limit of the ordinary civilian intellect, but they looked upon it as an occasional and harmless affair, the necessary overflow of boyish high spirits and love of frolic. On the surface everything was going on swimmingly; indeed, so secretly have the military managers managed it that they have the authorities passed on over that for some years the public has supposed that this relic of primeval savagery had lapsed into innocuous desuetude.

But the probing of the Investigating Committee has revealed a systematic course of brutal ill-treatment, accompanied by cruelties that would do credit to Comanche Indians, which has lasted for years and was still in full and active operation, and the American people have been reluctantly forced to believe it. We have seen what a storm of indignation and disgust has swept the whole country; the leading papers, members of Congress and citizens of many States, have agreed, but one sentiment, the people of the United States have expressed in unmistakable language their opinion of bullies and cowards and have demanded that this disgrace to the school and the country shall be removed. It would be as much in disgrace as the people of Virginia have shared in this feeling, and naturally, for there is no section of the globe where courage and manliness are more appreciated than in the Old Dominion and no people who

more thoroughly despise the oppression of the weaker by the strong. But while condemning West Point practices, they should see if the same reproach does not apply to their own military school. Is hazing any more despised at the V. M. I. than at West Point? Is a bully any more to be despised or punished at West Point than at the V. M. I.? Is brutality and cowardice any more excusable in one school than the other? Is disobedience or insubordination of a superior officer any more excusable in one school than the other? Is a cadet in one school than the other? The same senseless practices prevail in both institutions. Although at West Point they take somewhat different forms and are greater in degree, the principle is the same—the persecution of the new boys by the upper-class men; the same pernicious code of honor (C) which seals the lips of the victim and protects the tormentor, who shamelessly violates his solemn promise to abstain from such practices; the same principle that hazing at the V. M. I. is very different from that at West Point; that it is harmless and trivial; that it is what most of us thought about West Point until the veil of secrecy was lifted, forcing the four-class men to testify. The fact is that the fourth-class boys at the V. M. I. are harassed and tormented almost beyond the point of endurance; they are the lackeys of the upper-class men, they run their errands, clean their rooms and sweep their rooms, and in addition have to submit without protest to any humiliations or punishments their superiors choose to inflict. If the truth is as to the treatment of the new boys at the V. M. I. could be made public, the people of Virginia and the fathers of these very boys would be greatly astounded. Would it not be well to turn on the light? or can the faculty and upper-class men be roused to a realization of this disgrace and the necessity of abolishing it? Will they wait like the West Point cadets till forced to do so by our national publicity? or will they set an example of manliness and generosity and themselves put an end to this shameful custom?

N-RAY.

### The Tax System.

Editor of The Times:

Sir—In The Times of January 23d you suggest to the General Assembly the need of improvements in the present system of taxation. I would like to suggest a few changes, especially where the handling of public funds is involved, as publicity.

You suggest "that the present law be so amended as to make it binding upon the Board of Supervisors in each county to print their statement in the county paper, when there is a newspaper in the county, as well as to post the statement at the court-house and at the voting precincts under the existing statute." Your suggestion is undoubtedly good. But may there not be a simpler and more effective publicity?

The law now requires a complete statement of county receipts and expenditures to be printed in clear and convenient form for easy distribution among the people. Require the treasurer or his deputy to give each taxpayer, along with his receipted tax account, a copy of such statement. This will be complete and effective publicity. Each taxpayer will thus have a sure means of knowing the receipts and expenses of his county. He will soon be almost as anxious to get his county statement as he is to get his individual tax receipt. If this means of publicity be adopted, there will be no need for posting such statements at the court-house and at the voting precincts.

This mode of publicity might cost a little more than the present system, but it would save the additional expense would be cheerfully borne by the people.

While I am writing, permit me to make some suggestions relating to tax accounts and tax receipts. Under our present system of collecting taxes it is possible and sometimes probable, that an individual taxpayer may demand and receive taxes which have once been paid. An ex-Commissioner of the Revenue tells me that an ex-taxpayer laid claim to back taxes due from twelve laborers. Tax accounts in due form were presented. The workmen hunted among their old papers. Ten receipted tax accounts were found. The finding of these receipts saved them from a double tax. Why should tax-payers be compelled to hoard their tax receipts, for years, as a safeguard against frauds, or mistake of tax collectors?

It should be made unlawful to demand taxes after one year from the first day of December in the year for which such taxes were levied; provided, however, that any tax account may be made collectible for a period not exceeding six years from the time it first became legally due, by the legal signature of the tax-payer across the back of the tax account.

Under our present system of collecting taxes, the Legislature is often petitioned to extend, by special act, the time in which some treasurer may collect back taxes. This is at the public expense. I have just been reading some special acts by which further time was given in which to collect taxes four years back. Many of these treasurers who want further time, were, perhaps, indulgent to the tax-payer in order to gain his support for re-election. Be this as it may, there is a better way. Let the law be so framed that no tax account which has not been returned delinquent, shall be collected after one year from the time it became legally due, unless such account be endorsed by the legal signature of the tax-payer across the back thereof. Then make such endorsed tax account good for five years from the time it first became legally due. This would be a safeguard to treasurer and tax-payer. It would be as much in disgrace as the people of Virginia have shared in this feeling, and naturally, for there is no section of the globe where courage and manliness are more appreciated than in the Old Dominion and no people who

J. A. JOHNSON.

Windsor, Va., January 30th.

## LATEST NEWS OF THE RAILROADS

Norfolk and Western Makes Remarkable Showing.

### SOME INTERESTING FIGURES.

Richmond's Transfer Business Growing—New James River Line Proposed—Other Items of Interest.

The advances in the values of Norfolk and Western Stocks and the demands for the securities of this road have attracted the attention of every market. In the course of the year, the advances have been steady and have not been affected by the violent fluctuations of the market, nor have they suffered from the manipulations of the professional. They have maintained their own and the only appreciable changes have been in the prices of the securities.

The increase in the business handled by the road has been something remarkable, and the acquisition of the Cincinnati, Portsmouth and Virginia has served as a decided stimulus to the properties of both roads.

The six months' income statement, just issued, taken in connection with the conservative dividend, action of the directors, brings out clearly the fortunate position which has been developed for Norfolk and Western property. Revenue additions, falling expenses, conservative financial policy, capable operating management, and improvement in equity values for the shareholders, with reasonable dividend distributions, form a combination of favoring circumstances not regularly found united.

EXCELLENT SHOWING. The general offices of the Norfolk and Western have issued, under the date of January 29th, a statement of the financial condition of the system at the date of the last annual report. The statement shows the company's capitalization as follows: Bonded debt, \$29,500,000; less owned by company, \$2,500,000; bonded debt, \$27,000,000; equipment bonds, \$25,000,000, making the total funded debt \$52,000,000, on which the interest annually accruing is \$2,250,000.

The company has taxes to pay amounting annually to about \$800,000, but last year \$387,527, but has no rentals, apparently, other than those which naturally fall to them in the operating expense account, so that the total fixed charges annually appear to be \$2,637,500. At the end of the last fiscal year the total stock capitalization was: Preferred (gross), \$25,000,000; of which \$22,147,500 was outstanding, while of common (gross) \$9,000,000. The net amount outstanding was \$41,567,500.

To pay 1 per cent. on the preferred requires annually \$999,396, and consequently fixed charges and preferred dividends total annually \$8,000,000. Says the statement: "The company, however, has a small income from investments, etc., which, for conservatism, we shall take as such a sum as will meet the fixed charges against operations for charges and preferred dividends \$5,500,000 per annum."

For the year ending June 30th, last, the company reported gross earnings, \$1,944,944, and operating expenses, \$1,131,167, showing that the company earned a clear surplus of \$2,500,000, over the requirements for fixed charges and dividends. For the five months ending November 29th, the company reports gross earnings, \$1,049,434; operating expenses, \$649,434; net earnings, \$400,000; less fixed charges, \$224,875; surplus, \$175,125.

From this, it appears that the net surplus of \$2,500,000, over the preferred dividends last year has been increased this year in five months to \$4,500,000, and a similar rate of increase in the remaining seven months would make the net increase, for the year, \$10,500,000, or a net surplus over preferred dividends, of \$8,500,000 in round figures. This would be a very good showing, and it is, however, understood that the management will appropriate not less than \$2,000,000 of the surplus for betterment.

The strong feature of Norfolk and Western is its efficient operating department, the departments of expense showing the following rates to the gross earnings: maintenance of way, 11.09 per cent.; maintenance of equipment, 11.43; conducting transportation, 2.87; general expenses, 2.29; making total expenses, 17.65, per cent. for the fiscal year of 1899-1900, while that of 1897-1898 was 70.15. The efficiency of the property is being increased.

It appears from the statement that making reasonable allowances, for maintenance and taking the company on its basis by efficiency of about \$5,500,000 gross earnings, would pay fixed charges and about \$500,000 gross earnings would pay charges and preferred dividends. Thus the Norfolk and Western could lose not less than \$400,000 per month gross earnings from this year's levy and still pay its preferred dividends.

THE RICHMOND TRANSFER COMPANY. The Richmond Transfer Company will, within the next fortnight, award the contract for extensive additions to the company's stables, located on the corner of Canal Street between Adams and Jefferson. Work on the proposed improvements will be begun immediately after the awarding of the contract, and will be rushed to completion.

Colonel S. H. Bowman, manager of the company, already has the plans of the proposed improvements in hand. The additions to the stables will be built on both the Adams and Jefferson-Streets sides, and will about double the present capacity of the stables. The addition to the each will be 170 feet long by 21 feet 6 inches in width, extending from Canal Street back to the alley in the rear. This wing will be used for stabling. The plan also call for the raising of the building another story, and the wing on the Jefferson-Streets side will be used for storage purposes, while the building on the second floor will be for carriages and conveyances. The appointments will be modern in every way.

REMEMBERED BY CLERKS. The clerks of the general office and tariff bureau of the Chesapeake and Ohio, yesterday presented Mr. A. P. Gilbert, chief clerk to General Freight Agent, with a handsomely-framed crayon. The picture is the work of Mr. Edward H. Mayfield, stenographer to Mr. Gilbert, who is a promising young man. The crayon is finely executed, and attracted much attention.

NEW RIVER LINE. It was stated yesterday that a company was being formed to establish a new line of steamers on James river between this city and Clarendon.

Capt. James Cline, a prominent river man, is at the head of the enterprise. The company proposes to buy a small freight and passenger steamer and operate it along the banks of the river.

RAILROAD NOTES. Mr. A. W. Towles, has been promoted to superintendent of transportation of the Chesapeake and Ohio, with headquarters at Topeka, Kan. Mr. Fawcley was formerly car service agent, of the Norfolk and Western, with headquarters at Roanoke, and was later Chief Clerk to Vice-President and General Manager Barr of the Santa Fe.

Mr. M. B. Casey, has been appointed acting superintendent of car service, of the Delaware Lackawanna and Western with headquarters at Scranton. Mr. C. E. Schaff, general manager of the Big Four, has been appointed agent of the C. C. and St. L. at Indianapolis, vice H. S. Fraser resigned. The office

# KAUFMANN & CO.

## Great Display of Velvet Ribbons.

New Suits and Skirts the Latest Attraction.

In October last we were induced by an extra discount upon the then low market to buy a large consignment of Velvet Ribbons for spot cash, so that 5,000 pieces is the complement of Black Velvet Ribbons with which we are starting the early spring season, and this includes all widths from No. 5 to No. 60 in the satin faced and from 1 1/4 to 5 in the linen back. If you are in any way interested in these goods which are to be offered at a lower price than ever before just look at our ribbon window on the corner of Fourth Street, and if you do not acknowledge it is one of the largest and best assortments of Velvet Ribbons ever displayed in Richmond we will be much surprised.

In our Suit and Skirt Department we are already showing novelties in wearing apparel and at such readily appreciative values we are not doubtful as to the success of the sale.

Black Satin-Faced Velvet Ribbons—new brands:		Black Satin-Faced Velvet Ribbons—new brands:		Black Satin-Faced Velvet Ribbons—new brands:	
No. 2.....	11c	No. 9.....	47c, 23c, and 29c	No. 30.....	33c and 55c
No. 3.....	12 1/2c	No. 12.....	20c, 29c, and 35c	No. 40.....	38c, 49c, and 55c
No. 4.....	14 1/2c	No. 16.....	23c, 35c, and 42c	No. 50.....	60c
No. 5.....	14c, 18c, and 18c	No. 22.....	29c, 43c, and 49c	No. 60.....	79c
No. 7.....	11c, 18c, and 21c				

SPECIAL.—A discount of 5 per cent. will be allowed on all Satin-Back Ribbons by taking the entire piece of ten yards.

The Crescent Brand of Linen-Back Velvet Ribbon has always been acknowledged one of the very best makes, and our innumerable stock of them covers all the desirable widths from 1 1/4 to 4.

Black Linen-Back Velvet Ribbon:		Black Linen-Back Velvet Ribbon:	
No. 1 1/4.....	15c for piece of ten yards	No. 3.....	30c for piece of ten yards
No. 1 1/2.....	18c for piece of ten yards	No. 4.....	40c for piece of ten yards
No. 1 3/4.....	20c for piece of ten yards	No. 5.....	50c for piece of ten yards
No. 2.....	25c for piece of ten yards		

## Suits and Skirts.

We have just received an assortment of nice quality cloth Walking Skirts, in black, blue and Oxford gray. There are two styles—one a five-gore skirt finished with nine rows of stitching, stitched lapped seams and outside pocket. The other a five-gore skirt ornamented with six rows tailor stitching, inverted pleat back and lapped seams. The cuts are exact reproductions of these Skirts, which are fully worth \$5.00, but we have put them on our counters at one price.

Commencing to-morrow we will put on sale our entire stock of R. & G. Corsets at 1/3 Off the Regular Price. The regular 75 R. & G. Corset in White will be sold to-morrow at 50c. The regular 50 R. & G. Corset in Black and White will be sold to-morrow at 62c. The regular 1/2 50 R. & G. Corset in White will be sold to-morrow at 95c. As there are only 150 of them you had better be early and take your choice.

## BROAD AND FOURTH STREETS.

John L. Williams & Sons BANKERS AND DEALERS IN Investment Securities.

Cor. 10th and Main Sts., Richmond, Va.

## MARKETS.

WEEKLY BANK STATEMENT. NEW YORK, Feb. 2.—The weekly statement of the Associated Banks shows:

Loans.....	\$71,508,200; inc.....	\$20,440,900
Deposits.....	\$38,017,500; inc.....	\$2,492,500
Circulation.....	\$51,319,100; inc.....	65,900
Legal tenders.....	\$74,894,200; inc.....	1,048,200
Specie.....	\$12,825,000; inc.....	1,114,800
Total reserve.....	\$249,250,000; inc.....	2,163,000
Reserve required.....	\$242,470,075; inc.....	\$123,625
Surplus reserve.....	\$24,808,250; dec.....	5,960,025

MONEY AND EXCHANGE.—Prime mercantile paper, 2 1/2 per cent. steady. Exchange steady, with actual business in bankers' bills at 48 1/2 for demand and at 48 1/4 for sixty days; posted rates, 48 1/2 and 48 1/4; Mexican, 48 1/2; Mexican dollars, 47.

CHEESE.—Steady; fancy large, full-cream, 14 1/2; fancy small, full-cream, 13 1/2.

EGGS.—Dull; State and Pennsylvania, at market, 20 1/2; western, at market, 19 1/2; Southern, at market, 18 1/2.

There was no change reported in sugar, molasses, rice, leather, hides, naval stores, metals or in any of the minor markets.

COFFEE MARKET. NEW YORK, Feb. 2.—The coffee market started steady in tone, prices 5 to 1/2 points higher, and after the call remained steadily dull, with insignificant variations. The market was quiet, with prices 1/2 to 10 points higher. Total sales, 16,750 bags, including March, \$5.55; May, \$5.65.

NEW YORK DRY GOODS MARKET. NEW YORK, Feb. 2.—DRY GOODS.—The market closed the week with a quiet tone prevailing throughout. There is no demand for cotton goods, except for small quantities, which are changing hands at previous prices. Print cloths inactive and unchanged. The American cotton yarn market is demoralized or medium, with low counts. Woolen and worsted yarns dull and easy. Linen yarns strong and advancing.

NAVAL STORES. CHARLESTON, S. C., Feb. 2.—TURPENTINE—Steady at 37 1/2. ROSIN—Firm and unchanged. WILMINGTON, N. C., Feb. 2.—SPIRITS OF TURPENTINE—Steady and unchanged; receipts, 48 casks. ROSIN—Steady and unchanged; receipts, 350 barrels. CRUDE TURPENTINE—Steady at \$1.20 1/2; receipts, 3 barrels. TAR—Steady at \$1.20; receipts, 703 barrels.

MARINE INTELLIGENCE. PORT OF RICHMOND, FEB. 2, 1901. ARRIVED. Steamer Rosalie, Willis, Norfolk, merchandise and passengers, Old Dominion line. Steamer Pocahontas, Graves, James River landings and Norfolk, merchandise and passengers, Virginia Navigation Co. Steamer Richmond, Catherine, Philadelphia, Pa., merchandise and passengers, Clyde Line. Steamer I. Don't Know, Larkin, James River, wheat, G. W. Taylor. SAILED. Steamer Rosalie, Willis, Norfolk, merchandise and passengers, Old Dominion line. Steamer Richmond, Catherine, Philadelphia, Pa., merchandise and passengers, Clyde Line.

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**ROBERT LEE TRAYLOR,**  
INSURANCE,  
SUCCESSION TO  
INS. DEPT.-VIRGINIA TRUST CO.  
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Conducts a General Insurance Agency. Representing the Following Companies:  
THE IMPERIAL OF LONDON.  
NORWICH UNION OF ENGLAND.  
SUN OFFICE OF LONDON.  
CALEDONIAN OF SCOTLAND.  
PALATINE OF LONDON.  
PHENIX OF LONDON.  
HAMBURG-BREMEN OF GERMANY.  
Aggregate Assets of Companies Represented, over \$500,000,000.  
Value of Bonds Deposited in Virginia, over \$500,000.  
SPECIAL ATTENTION GIVEN TO INSURANCE ON DWELLINGS AND HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE.  
LOWEST RATES. CAREFULLY DRAWN CONTRACTS. ABSOLUTE SECURITY.

**Thos. Branch & Co.**  
Members of New York Stock Exchange.  
BANKERS & BROKERS.  
Investment Securities a Specialty.  
Correspondence Solicited.

**Academy.**  
Monday, Matinee and Night, SIDE-TRACKED  
Tuesday, Matinee and Night, ERIC HOPE.  
The COUNCILLOR'S WIFE  
Friday and Saturday, AL. WILSON.  
Regular prices.

**Academy of Music.**  
Thursday Evening, Feb. 14  
For the Benefit of The Police Benevolent Association.  
J. William Macy  
Humorist and Buffo Basso.  
Miss Gay Ragland  
Operatic Soprano Artist.

**Valentine Party**  
under auspices of Miss Mary Thomas Auxiliary, for Home for Incurables. JEFFERSON HOTEL BALL-ROOM. FEBRUARY 14th, 5 P. M.  
No postponement on account of weather. Admission.....50c.

**ACADEMY.**  
MONDAY FEBRUARY 12th.  
Concert and Drama, benefit of Home for Incurables. Miss Gay Ragland, soprano; Mr. William Richards, baritone; Prof. Sigmond Kahn, renowned German pianist. Prof. CHAS. MEISSEN, the veteran actor and full company in "DAVID GARROCK."  
Admission.....50c.  
Tickets can be exchanged for reserved seats at Academy box-office without extra charge.

**Summer Rest**  
Entertainment at Academy of Music, FEBRUARY 12th, for the benefit of the Rest. Admission, 50c. Tickets may be exchanged for reserved seats at Academy box-office on or after February 9th without extra charge.

**Grand Ball**  
AT GIFFERTI HALL, MONDAY NIGHT, FEB. 4, 1901.

**CASH** for acceptable ideas. State if patented. THE PATENT RECORD, Baltimore, Md.

**Illustrated Lecture at Jefferson Hotel, by CAPT. HARRIE WEBSTER, U. S. Navy, on "CHINA AND THE CHINESE." WEDNESDAY, FEB. 6th, at 8:30 P. M., for the benefit of the Catholic School of Manchester. Season tickets, 75c. Seats on sale at Jefferson Hotel office and Rosemary Library.**

**CONCERT AT LEADER HALL, Manchester, THURSDAY, February 14th, for the benefit of the Catholic School of Manchester. Performance begins promptly at 8 P. M. Admission 25 cents.**